

**Some Comments Upon
the History of Handwriting Analysis**

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(Signed) Robert L Backman

SOME COMMENTS UPON THE HISTORY OF HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

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Fellow handwriting analysts:

The topic that I was asked to discuss was “a history of handwriting analysis from 1625 to date.”

I hope that what follows will not be too unexpected, since I have elected to go much farther back into history, and I shall try to keep away from the “dry-as-dust” type of history, and instead, talk about the more “human” approach to this subject.

Historians are not in perfect agreement as to the time and place of the interest in interpretation of character and of personality traits from handwriting. It is generally assumed that Asia is the cradle of man, as well as the cradle of interest in handwriting as a revealer of character and personality traits.

Handwriting analysis almost certainly had its origin in the study of handwriting. Through the years of man's written recorded history, generations of priests, scholars and philosophers have contemplated the mystery of handwriting, and have pondered its hidden clues to traits of human personality.

Very early indeed, civilized man began to recognize that handwriting, in its forms and strokes, gave clues symptomatic of the underlying personality of the person who had written.

Handwriting analysis was not developed in a year, or a decade, or a century; it is founded upon over three thousand years of study, observations, experimentation, discovery and research—which in turn have come down to us through years of cumulative records of investigation and learning, bit by bit, of handwriting as a betrayer of character.

Handwriting analysis, as we know it today, is the result of years of basic observation, investigation, experimentations and research, covering many, many hundreds of thousands of specimens of writings, extensive study of the script-intensive study of various systems of penmanship and their influence on individual writings. The technique that we use is the result of countless investigations, comparisons and determinations.

A good history of any subject should be thoroughly documented throughout, and it is the result of careful study of a great many original source materials. Such a history requires a

meticulous literature research, grasp of detail, and a critical sifting of evidence-and to this specific technique, the historian must add the art of lucid expression.

In my historical research of the early and primitive handwriting analysis, I have tried to examine every available item. Let me admit, here and now, that there is a great deal that I do not know, and very probably shall never know. However, I have made diligent effort, over twenty years or more, to actually examine every item that has come my way, from European or Asiatic sources, whether articles, original items, and the like, which might shed some light or clarify obscurities. I have also tried to hunt out correspondence, letters, notes and memoranda on this subject, from whatever source. I am particularly indebted to the Libraries of Hamilton College, Colgate University, Syracuse University, Cornell University, and of Utica College, for their help to me, over the years, in gleaning bits and pieces of information search that I am still continuing, in fact.

My search has led me to seek historical magazine and journal articles on topics such as: graphomancy, chiromancy, physiognomy, chiromancy, autography, and so on, for the period of about 30 B.C. until as recently as 1963. I have also consulted a great many encyclopedias, in several languages—editions ranging from around 1710 through 1965, on this subject, in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Danish, not to mention consulting a great many histories of writing in various European languages whenever possible, I have tried to track down original source documents, so that what follows will be both factual and soundly and extensively researched.

The comments that follow will lead to follow a rough outline, something as follows:

1. Origins

a. Primitive and Ancient (India, China, Egypt, Greece)

Limited graphological knowledge; a few graphological principles had been known for many centuries before Christ,

b. Classical and Medieval (Roman, Italian, European)

Virtually no progress in graphological discoveries until about 1580. Some discoveries, and those few were accidental and tended to be kept secret.

c. Renaissance:

Baldi through Lavater.

d. Modern:

Flandrin, Goethe, Hocquart, Henze; Crepieux-Jamin, Michon, Busse, Dr. Meyer, Preyer; Klages; Saudek, Jacoby, Pulver,

Early researches, modern researches; pioneers in modern analysis technique, Versus

public attitude

2. Present status of handwriting analysis:

- a. As a profession;
- b. Present outlook, in Europe, and in America.

While the above outline seems brief, it is deceptive. There is a vast amount of ground to be covered, and I shall be hitting only the 'high spots' in my discussion this evening.

One might divide the history of handwriting analysis into eras or epochs; Primitive, Ancient, Classical, Medieval, Renaissance, Pre-modern, and moderns respectively. The last epoch, is the era of true research study, and it is in the coming century itself that handwriting analysis may be ventured to be called in the truly evolutionary era proper. Dividing any history into periods is largely a matter, of convenience.

Accordingly, the period prior to the second century before Christ might be labeled the prehistoric days of handwriting analysis. Then followed a long period of extremely slow growth of graphological observations and concepts. In endeavoring to trace the origins of handwriting analysis we are carried back to the confines of a prehistoric age. History tells us that in the remotest period of the Aryan civilizations it had even a literature of its own. Beyond this we cannot go; but, as fragments of this literature are even now extant, we must therefore conclude that it had a still more remote antiquity or Infancy--but into that dark night of time we cannot venture There are no guideposts to show us the way; thus, standing on the borders of the known, we gaze into the darkness of the unknown, from the vastness of which we occasionally draw a fragment; they are helps to knowledge; they are traces upon the sand of time; they tell us of days before our days of human knowledge before our knowledge, of civilizations sunk forever in the ocean of antiquity.

As regards the people who first understood and practiced the study and interpretation of handwriting, we find undisputed proofs of their learning and knowledge. Long before Israel or Assyria or Greece or Rome were even heard of the monuments of India point back to an age of learning beyond, and still beyond.

In some of the ancient cave temples, the mystic figures silently tell us that much such knowledge had been possessed and used in advance of all those nations afterward so celebrated for their learning,

The intellectual power which was necessary to make such observations of graphic behavior speaks for itself; and yet it is to such a people that we trace the origin of the study of handwriting analysis With the spread of the Hindu teachings into other lands do we trace the spread of the knowledge of handwriting interpretation. The Hindu Vedas are the oldest Scriptures

ever found, and according to some authorities, were the foundation of even the Greek school of learning.

When we consider that handwriting is the offspring of such a race, we should for such a reason alone at least treat it with respect, and be more inclined to examine its claims for justice than we are at present. In the examination of these points, we therefore find that this study of handwriting is one of the most ancient in the world.

An extremely ancient and curious book on the markings of handwritings exists in India; this book is one of the greatest treasures of the few Brahmans who possess and understand it, and it is jealously guarded in one of those old cave temples. This strange book is made of human skin, pieced and put together ingeniously. It is of enormous size, and contains hundreds of illustrations, with notations of how, when, and where this or that peculiarity mark of writing was proved to correctly relate to some trait of character.

One of the strangest features in connection with this book is that it is written in some red liquid which age has failed to spoil or fade. The effect of the vivid red letters on the pages of dull yellow skin is most remarkable. By some compound, probably made of herbs, each page was glazed, as it by varnish; but whatever this compound may have been, it seemed to defy time, as the outer covers alone showed the signs of wear and decay.

As regards the antiquity of this book, there could be no question, it was apparently written in three sections or divisions; the first part belonged to the earliest language of the country, and dated so far back that very few of even the Brahmans could read or decipher it.

There are other such treasures in India, but all are so jealously guarded by the Brahmans that neither money, art, nor power will ever release such pledges of the past.

As the wisdom of this strange race spread, so the doctrines and ideas of handwriting interpretation spread and were practiced in other countries. Just as religion suits itself to the conditions of the race in which it is propagated, so has handwriting interpretation been divided into systems. The most ancient records, however, are those found among the Hindus. It is difficult to trace the path of handwriting, and of handwriting interpretation, from country to country.

Naturally enough, those first 'primitive' analysts were not concerned with graphological or psychological theory; they were chiefly interested in techniques and method, that is, in the practical problem of interpreting character from handwriting. Absurd as much of this practice may seem to us, a deeper meaning often underlies the perverse and crude graphic behavior phenomena of mental life.

The handwriting interpretation of the ancient Hindus leads us unquestionably into the

domain of science, for they possessed everything that many people consider the essence of genuine science, namely, technical and learned terminology, books, experimental practice, and something of an academic and professional status. The Hindu handwriting interpreters, to be sure, were largely entrusted with priestly functions, and therefore their graphology was saturated with mythology. However, this should not prevent us from recognizing their science as a primitive science.

The esoteric Hindu graphology is preoccupied, with the individual psyche, the psychic apparatus & individuality and consciousness, in relation to the variable nature of man. From the individuality principle stem the sense organs and the organs of action. There also appear the Monas, which intervene between the perceptory and motor organs. These are only a few, of the subtle distinctions of this graphology.

But it is already evident that the Hindus had clearly formulated the problem of the essence of personality and the co-existence of its separate traits and tendencies.

In far-distant ages handwriting interpretation has been practiced in China, Tibet, Persia and Egypt; but it is to the days of Grecian civilization that we owe the first attempt to give a clear and lucid form to handwriting interpretation.

We find that Anaxagoras practiced the rudiments of handwriting interpretation in B.C. We find that Hermetus discovered, on an altar dedicated to Hermes, a book on chiromancy written in gold letters which he sent as a present to Alexander the Great, as a "study worthy of the attention of an elevated and inquiring mind." We find the interpretation of handwriting also sanctioned by such men of learning as Aristotle, Pliny, Paracelsus, Cardanus, and many others of note. (Later, the Roman Emperor Augustus, and Albertus Magnus, were to become interested).

The point which has been admitted, and which concerns us in this discussion the most, is that as in those days the greatest study of mankind was man himself, it therefore follows that in a historical survey of handwriting interpretation, their conclusions are far more likely to be right than are those of our modern age famous for its implements of destruction and its commerce.

Those Greek philosophers were men of extraordinary depth of thought and learning; their works, thoughts and ideas are worthy of the deepest respect; why, then, should we lightly consider their authority on the subject of handwriting interpretation, and throw aside a study that so deeply occupied their attention?

Now, as in the study of mankind there came to be recognized a natural position for handwriting interpretation, so also there came to be recognized a natural position for the strokes and lines of the various letter forms, and so on. The time and study devoted to this subject enabled those students to give names to these marks, such as vertical script, indicating that

mentality controls, slanting script, indicating affection; firm strokes and lines, health; and so on, with every graphic mark that handwriting, as they understood it, possessed.

The Greeks were nearer to a modern graphology than were the Hindus, and much that was taught about human nature in Athenian academies has influenced the development of Western psychology and graphology. Greek graphology was also partially a development of folk beliefs relating to handwriting and its interpretation.

While all these theories are concerned chiefly with the substance of human nature, later thinkers attempted to determine its form largely by substantializing it. The personality concepts of the Atomists, who thought that the mind consisted of atoms, and of course the smallest, smoothest and most mobile atoms, were not yet freed of substance. The mind-theory of the Pythagoreans was even more formal, despite its strong mysticism. The Sophists energetically raised the question of individual differences of particular minds, and developed the beginnings of a critical theory of perception.

We have but an incomplete knowledge of ancient handwriting interpretation theories, and we must often reconcile or reconstruct them entirely from a few existing fragments. In Plato's theory of the mind, however, we find the first system of psychology. Plato sought to solve the difficult problem of the unity of the different functions of the mind in many masterly pictures. We know from the *Phaedrus*, his comparison of the mind to a team of horses, where Reason, as driver, holds together the two horses, Courage and Appetite. This trisection of the mind is carried out in greater detail in the *Politeia*. And in the *Theaetétus*, psychology appears. All in all, Plato's mind-theory remained well within the bounds of animism, it strongly stimulated analytic psychology.

The psychology of Aristotle was a distinct advance beyond animism. Although he, too, viewed the mind as metaphysical in origin, he considered it primarily as the life principle. His psychology linked itself with biology. He held that the mind was the creative form of all organisms, a self-unfolding, not a rigid form, an entelechy. He solved the problem of multiplicity in unity by distinguishing several separate minds. The thinking mind, Reason, however, was further subdivided into a passive and an active reason.

Together with these theories of the essence of the mind as a whole which are only now being revived in present day psychology, we find in Aristotle keen analyses of sensory experience, thought and emotion, which are valuable forerunner of analytic psychology. The modern handwriting analyst and psychologist indeed can still learn a great deal more from Aristotle's books: *De Anima*; *Ethics* *Rhetoric*; while among his encyclopedic writings the outlines of his theory of type and of character are to be found.

In the last century before Christ, the school of Epicurus, and in that of the Stoics, there was a rather materialistic concept of the mind; nevertheless they developed a detailed classification of the mental faculties. They distinguished a guiding principle in the mind, and opposed it to the emotions and instincts. The emotions and passions were conceived as perversions of reason, to be subdued.

The Greek studies of the mind, and of personality as we see, also traveled the road from theological and metaphysical speculation to a biological empirical faculty (trait) psychology.

Handwriting interpretation, sometimes looked down upon by the present generation, was in former days studied by philosophers and scholars of eminent celebrity and authority. Among them were Aristotle, Galen, Ptolemy, Avicenna, Averroes, and so on.

Many of the Ptolemies were noted for their literary tastes, and for their studies of esoteric philosophy. Ptolemaeus Logos founded the Alexandrine Library.

Antiochus Tibertus was the pseudonym of one of the earliest of the chiromants who left some comments on the subject of interpreting character from handwriting.

All of these philosophers left us some random reflections on handwriting and character, and in a few cases, short treatises on the art of divination by the observation of the strokes and lines traced by the hand treatises which amply prove the high esteem with which they regarded the subject of handwriting interpretation.

Patritio Tricasso de Cerasari also commented on handwriting and character.

Here and there, among the mummeries of the ancient chiromancer, one finds decisive observations and indications resulting from repeated observations, which it is convenient to admit; for example:

1. Supple script indicates skill, curiosity;
2. Clumsy script shows weakness of mind; . Hooks at beginning of words show avarice;
4. Very short, thick letters Indicate cruelty;
5. Long, thin scripts are usually those of diplomats, deceivers, sharps, or thieves;
6. Tendency toward theft is indicated by the small letters 'a" and broken at the bottom;
7. Curiosity and indiscretion are the characteristics of those who leave small a's and a's wide open at the top;
8. Smooth, flowing script indicates loquacity and levity of mind;
9. Violent gestures, in handwriting, are a mark of impetuosity, quickness, temper;
10. Hook strokes at ends of words show an avaricious and tenacious mind; and so on!

Those are from Tricasso, mentioned previously.

Thus, as we have seen, the idea of studying handwriting as an indicator of character traits

actually began thousands of years ago.

Over 1900 years ago, Nero found himself wary of a certain man at court, “His writing shows him to be treacherous,” said Nero; here we have a judgment of the inner man according to the mark of his hand!

We must remember that it was quite an accomplishment to attempt to classify handwritings in those days. For example, the letter of Brutus to Atticus on what happened between Ciceron and Octavian is still considered good analyzing, even today!

The barbarian onslaught and the Dark Ages drove the study of handwriting and its characterological interpretation into the monasteries, where it survived as a “secret knowledge” of the precious few.

This brings us down to the period when the power of the Church was beginning to be felt outside the domain and jurisdiction of religion, per Se. It is said that the early Fathers were jealous of the power of this old-world science. Such may or may not have been the case; but even today, we find that often the Church constitutes itself, in all matters, both spiritual and temporal, the chosen oracle of God. Without wishing to seem intolerant, one cannot help but remark that the history of any dominant religion is the history of the opposition to knowledge, unless that knowledge proceeds from its teachings.

Handwriting interpretation, therefore, the child of pagans and of heathens, was not even given a trial. It was denounced as rank. sorcery and witchcraft. The result was that people, terrified to acknowledge such a parentage, allowed handwriting interpretation to become outlawed and fall into the hands of a few vagrant mendicant monks, who practiced handwriting interpretation privately and in secret. There were a few scholastics who secretly pursued the art.

One outstanding example was Roger Bacon (1214-1294). He was born in 1214 near Ilchester in Somersetshire; he studied at Oxford in 1250, determined on his own courses and methods of study. He was a very shrewd observer and experimenter, and he dabbled in astronomy Bacon took his doctorate in theology in Paris about 1249, and entered the Franciscan Order as a friar. In 1265, Bacon wrote: *Opus Majus*; *Opus Minus* and *Opus Tertium*. The last-named book has four mentions of handwriting as revealing of traits of character. In 1271, Bacon wrote *Compendium Studii Philosophiae*. This work twice mentions handwriting as an indicator of character. Because of his interest in experimentation and astronomy, Bacon was persecuted as a magician, although he wrote against magic. Bacon was imprisoned from 1278 to 1292, and died in 1294.

During the Middle Ages, the chief aim of Scholastic psychology and handwriting interpretation was to prove that the mind was nevertheless a supernatural essence. Medieval

psychology was not altogether dependent on ancient psychology; it raised new problems of its own Augustine discovered something new when he focused attention on the will as well as on the intellect. Nominalism likewise raised problems, such as that of the purely symbolic character of consciousness.

Most medieval savants were of two minds about the subject of interpreting character from handwriting; they wanted the benefit of graphological advice, but they did not want anybody else to have it. The subject therefore was quietly hidden by many of those savants, who studied and explored the subject privately, and in secret.

During the 14th and 15th centuries, there were many legends of the ecclesiastics as being magicians and sorcerers. The popular conceptions of magic and of magicians, were affected both by sentiments which the common multitude could not avoid, and by phenomena which they could not understand. It is evident that in the popular mind the conviction was gaining ground that the profession of the religious vows was often combined with the practice of magic.

During the Middle Ages, ignorance and superstition had combined to associate suspicions and traditions of magical powers with intellectual efforts and tendencies. The love of knowledge, a passion the least explicable to the vulgar, had from an early time been assigned as a motive for supposed contacts with the devil. The history of Medieval science had hardly a page without the blot of this popular misconception. Further, the rare and infrequent mention of handwriting as a revealer of character, was considered as black magic, indeed.

Besides the ignorance of the ignorant, there was a stumbling block on the path of a freer scientific research—the unwillingness of the learned themselves to learn more and new things in new ways. Kings, emperors, the Church, colleges and universities—all insinuated the uselessness of new knowledge; they tended to neglect and condemn the sciences of which they were ignorant.

The suspicious ignorance of the common masses confused the search for hidden knowledge with a desire to know forbidden things; they confused experimentation with the black arts. Scientific inventions, instruments, and discoveries were regarded as magical by the vulgar. Thus, true though imperfect science, and honest though misdirected research, were considered, in the minds of the people, as magic and as black arts.

The very few who had one or two bits of knowledge about handwriting as a revealer of character therefore tended to keep such knowledge very secret indeed—knowledge to be entrusted to only a very, very select few.

During the 15th century, the growing love of travel and of adventure caused students to migrate; these vagrant scholars carried whole bodies of doctrine from University to University, transplanting, as it were, part of Paris to Oxford, Oxford to Prague, Prague to Bologna, and so on.

The vagrant scholars of this period were possessed of, and practiced a multitude of arts, and were masters of a mysterious variety of knowledge. They were seen at the courts of kings and princes, and in the rapidly multiplying universities, in the houses and homes of every class of men.. Many of these vagrant scholars were physicians, academic lecturers, theologians, mendicant friars, and the like.

Parallel with this migration of vagrant scholars was an increase in the popular belief in sorcery, witchcraft, astrology, and alchemy—which was to continue into the Reformation and following centuries..

A few of these vagrant scholars had a small smattering of graphological knowledge, knowing a few of the signs in handwriting that pointed out traits of character. However, most of the vagrant scholars were exceedingly chary about divulging such knowledge, since most laymen considered such knowledge black magic, and proof positive that its possessor had leagued himself with the devil—an invitation to be burned at the stake!

There were also a few monks who possessed this secret knowledge.

Johann Trithemius (Trithemius 1L621516), was born in 1462 in Trithem, the village from which he took his name, on the left bank of the Moselle River. After many wanderings, he pursued his studies at Heidelberg, and spent his latter years as Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery at Sponheim, which he exchanged for another, abbacy at Wurzburg, where he died in 1516.

Trithemius, encouraged by the good will of Emperor Maximilian I, wrote on many subjects and in many branches of literature, especially theology. His studies were extended to the physical and metaphysical speculations, and in his *Steganographia*, he approached the boundary line between Kabbalism and magic. This work also contains three mentions of handwriting clues as betraying traits of character. Paradoxically, even though Trithemius condemned necromancy and witchcraft, the laity believed him a magician and a sorcerer.

As you can already infer, during the Middle Ages, several attempts were made to revive this ancient study of handwriting interpretation, as for instance, In *Die Kunst Chiromantia*, published in 1475, which contains a few remarks on the art of interpreting character traits from handwriting. Another work, *Cyromantia Aristotelis cum Figuris*, published in 1490 contains a few mentions of handwriting interpretation. These attempts were useful in keeping the ashes of the study of handwriting interpretation from dying out; but it was not to be until the 19th century that handwriting interpretation was to really arise once more a Phoenix from the fire of persecution which had tried in vain to destroy it

As the world emerged from the Middle Ages, the interpretation of handwriting once more became a topic of wide interest. Some of the Church hierarchy were interested in the subject, and

many university professors were quietly experimenting with the possibilities of interpretation of character from hand writing.

Other independent observers made significant discoveries or offered insightful hints. A growing number of observers were becoming unwilling to accept mere chance as the explanation of graphic behavior phenomena. Theoreticians revolved these questions in their minds, coming up at times with bizarre theories, and at other times, attaining some very insightful theories.

The early investigators' passion was to explore graphic behavior clues as indicative of certain traits of character. After the 15th century, a few improvements were made in the then-known graphological principles, but that was all (Trithemius)

The majority of these early observers and investigators did not write down their observations or experiments, or at best, set down only inadequate summaries of them, which were written down by others and then published as portions of other works. The result: a few very short speculative essays, badly written.

Most of these early investigators did not have the ability to write up their observations or experiments, but they did have diligence, tenacity and consistency in thought and action, and their experiences enabled them to give some general idea of their procedures. A few were deeply afraid of premature conclusions or hypotheses which they could not justify by ample evidence. And it was almost impossible to extract their primitive graphological theories from them. Moreover, very few of them left any written descriptions of their methods or procedures.

As we have seen, the idea of judging character from handwriting is not new. In fact, it existed long before Emperor Nero's time, when he said of a man in his court, "His writing shows him to be treacherous."

At the beginning of the 17th century, Europe was dazedly emerging from the Dark Ages, and psychology was still an infant creeping in the dark, while physiology had fallen very low.

The physical welfare of man was taken care of largely by natural traditional remedies, and by crude, casual experiments, and by a strange breed, the barber-surgeon; mental welfare was simply disregarded. The world was a sort of grand confusing masquerade, and no one had been able to produce much satisfactory, concrete evidence that there was anything behind the mask at all.

In the 1620s, an Italian scholar, Camillo Baldi, wrote a little book with a long title which translates "Treating of how a written message may reveal the nature and qualities of its writer."

Historians disagree on the exact location where this book was published; some say Florence, and some say Capri. However this may be, Baldi was the first published author on the subject of handwriting analysis, but beyond this fact, little has been known. The point is that by

the early 17th century, interest in handwriting interpretation was already well established.

As we have seen, long before 1600, many writers expressed their thoughts that handwriting could reveal the character, the faculties or traits and the personality of an individual. But it is only since the 17th century that we have books proving that handwriting would become a real science.

In 1609 Francois Demelle, who is recognized by many as the first graphologist in France, wrote a book of 151 pages entitled “Advice for judging false inscriptions, or comparison of handwritings and signatures.” Demelle affirms that handwriting not only shows the character of a person, but also the action of the will in its different directions according to the person; also that child ran who try to copy faithfully the writing model given by their teachers have all differentiations in their writings.

In 1611, G. Moriandi, who was making some investigation; came across a pamphlet *L'Ideographie* by Prosper Alderisius. it is a curious pamphlet in Latin, and often Italian graphologists consider him as Italy's first graphologist.

In October, 1609, in the *Mercure de France*, some anonymous letters were published, containing some hints as to how to judge a few traits of character from handwriting. These anonymous letters have been attributed to Demelle.

It was in 1625, in Milan, that Baldi's *Trattato* was published.

With the new attitudes toward life, of the Renaissance, accounts of graphological observations began to appear, as we have just noted. In a sense, beginning with Baldi, there emerged a “classical” period in the history of handwriting analysis

Baldi spent years, in his spare time, culling aphorisms about handwriting and character from other works. It would seem that Baldi's hobby was the seeking the scattered graphological ideas, wherever they might be recorded among any literary observations pertaining to handwriting as a revealer of character. He had access to various university libraries, and apparently he was most diligent in his hunt, judging from the citations that Baldi makes in his *Trattato*. By about 1619 or 1620, Baldi's notes had accumulated to a point where he began to consider writing a small tract or paper on his findings and hypotheses about handwriting interpretation.

The result was that Baldi gave us the first important work on handwriting interpretation. In reading his little book, *Trattato Come da una Lettera Missiva Se Conoscano la Natura e Qualita Dello Scrittore*, Milan, 1625, we can see that Baldi had read all that was written before his time on graphology.

Baldi was born in Bologna. At 22, he was not only a doctor of philosophy, but also of

medicine. He was not only a great writer and scientist, but a great Christian, ever ready to help even those who were not his friends. He received many titles, and honors. He was a member of many learned Academies, but he never became haughty or proud and until he died at the age of 87, he was admired by all who came in contact with him. The memory he left during the long years he spent teaching at the University of Bologna was so great that even 50 years after his death, it was decided to erect a monument to his memory. Baldi wrote many books on all kinds of subjects, and one can still read them in libraries in Italy.

Baldi's *Trattato* deals with the style of handwriting and other things, but we shall mention only the part concerning writing. Baldi said that at first sight, one must extricate what seemed to be the important factors in the letter and its results. For instance, if we see arrogance in the writing, we can rest assured that the writer might lack the maturity of mind and good habits of living. If the writer does not know how to express his thoughts, we can judge him as a person with very little education.

First, the Exterior: character known or unknown, friend or enemy, poor or rich, superior or inferior, free or slave, honest or dishonest; in a word, all the reputation of a man, his race, his ways of living, and the disposition of his mind at the time he was writing, etc.

Second, the Physical: various physical characteristics can be recognized if not by a direct way, surely by means of a few results and by examination of other traits. Activity or slowness, inertia or awkwardness, tall or small, health, energy, old age, sex, degree of culture, amiability, vivacity, gracefulness, or the contrary and many other things.

Third, the Intelligence: the examination of a letter shows even better the sort of intelligence the person can possess; if the person is industrious, wise, has common sense, is educated, pious, clever, careful, versatile, kind, devoted, free of himself, vain, nasty, artificial, sarcastic, dangerous, temperamental, changeable, passionate, etc.

Fourth, the Moral: the moral qualities are easier to find than the exterior or physical ones. We can see the joyfulness, strictness, arrogance, tenacity, hardness, ambition, all the feelings of hate, love, temper, fear, envy, indignation, sweetness and kindness. We can make all kinds of deductions if we try to find what his pleasures are, and according to his writing, what is native to him, and the habits which have been acquired.

As we can observe, until about 1630, was the period of much curiosity about handwriting and character, interspersed at times with some penetrating flashes of insight, and that the tendency toward investigation and study was gradually evolving until it finally became a small stream of progress, with Baldi's *Trattato*, which was to later be expanded by others.

The psychologists and graphologists of the Renaissance had an altogether different

conception of the mind from that of the monkish psychologist and graphologists of the Middle Ages, just as science in general during the 16th and 17th centuries concerned, itself less with supernatural than with natural problems, so the handwriting investigators of the Renaissance were more occupied with the earthly reality of the mind than with its heavenly future. The psychology of the 16th century had already begun to study mental life with scientific methods. In the 17th century, the scientific method made great strides..

Descartes held that emotions arose from the union of body and mind. Spinoza invented a parallelistic monism in the body mind question which exerts its influence to the present day.

Probably the first book published in German dealing with handwriting interpretation, unknown to most bibliographers, is *Kleeblatt*, by Niclas Spadons and published by Nuernberg by Ziegers (I.G.D.T.) in 1695. The edition consists of three volumes, bound in full vellum, comprising more than 800 pages, has numerous copper engravings relating to chiromy, physiognomy, handwriting, and the like.

But the temper of the times tended more and more to set aside the social and practical aspects of interpreting handwriting, and to explore more the truly scientific aide, The results of these explorations were generally discouraging. Newtonian physics, which established the rule of scientific reason, persuaded the intellectual community that handwriting interpretation bordered upon superstitious fancy—a breach that has tended to exist ever since, and only recently has been narrowed.

The 18th century studied psychology and handwriting interpretation less in connection with metaphysics than as an adjunct of epistemology. Interest was not just in physiological psychology, but in an analysis of the acts of cognition. Locke assumed two sources of consciousness sensation and reflection,

His distinction between primary and secondary qualities (Personality traits) was to prove specially stimulating to the future, Although Locke’s major interest wag epistemological not psychological, the new association psychology was greatly influenced by him. Certain inconsistencies of his were eliminated by his successors.

Berkeley produced a first-rate empirical analysis of space perception and an ingenious critique of imagination, thereby continuing the analysis of consciousness begun by Locke,

D, Hartley was among the Pioneers of modern analysis of consciousness. However, he placed the greatest stress on the connection of mental events with cerebral and nerve processes.

In contrast with the empiricism and sensationalism of English and French thinkers, respectively, an *a priori* and rationalistic tendency in Psychology and in handwriting interpretation was advanced in Germany. O. Wolff is known as the founder of “faculty” (trait)

Psychology (knowing faculty, desiring faculty) and so on. Tetens added emotion as a third faculty, while others further increased the number of faculties (or traits),

Scottish philosophy appealed to “common observation,” direct consciousness, teaching that we have innate mental forces that do not arise from external experience.

Thus, the contradictions that exist in both Psychology and in handwriting analysis today were already assuming shape in the 18th century: passivism vs. apriorism; sensualism vs. rationalism; empiricism vs. apriorism; all, of course, then closely connected with epistemology and ethics.

Toward the end of the 18th century, Goethe and Lavater were corresponding with one another, comparing observations on handwriting as an indicator of traits of personality. This correspondence developed as a result of Lavater’s intensive studies in physiognomy (1777-1779), in which he made a great many observations and remarks about handwriting.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Moreau wrote some 20 odd pages about handwriting, in his translation of Lavater’s physiognomical works into French. Shortly thereafter, Hocquart, a Belgian lexicographer and encyclopedist, who was living in Paris, anonymously wrote a small book on judging character from handwriting.

All over Europe, individuals such as Thomas Carlyle, Robert and Mrs. Browning, Thackeray, and others, were interested in the subject of handwriting analysis. In America, Edgar Allan Poe and R. C. Sands were so fascinated by the subject that they wrote short articles about interpreting handwriting. Poe’s series became known as Autography, and R. C. Sands’ article in Graham’s Magazine created quite a stir of interest. Thus, Poe and Sands were among the first American authors in the field of handwriting analysis.

The developments of psychology in the first half of the 19th century—for our brief survey of trends, we must refer again to the psychologists and handwriting analysts of this period, and of earlier periods as well. One of the fundamental themes in the history of handwriting interpretations research is that modern graphology is by no means so independent of its predecessor's as one might think or believe. The first founders of a psychological laboratory had to begin at the beginning, it is true, and then build up a new science on the basis of their experiments. But they themselves did not always know how many old theories they carried with them, nor how far their very experiments were influenced by the old psychology, This is why we are making only a historical survey.

Psychology and handwriting interpretation were cultivated in many nations: Germany, France, Switzerland, Austria England, For example, in France, about 1800, Cabanis and DeStutt de Tracy connected psychology with physiology, In England, A. Bain emphasized the

significance of action and kinesthetic sensation for mental life. We shall come back to all these psychologists later, for the transition to the so-called “new” graphology is not so abrupt as it is sometime claimed or represented.

A stately train of pioneers blazed the trail for modern handwriting analysis. All of them had attempted to fathom human nature, partly in solitary introspection, partly through observation of their neighbors, partly through a study of physical happenings, partly in logical speculation; they attempted to grasp the mind and human nature, an extremely variable entity. And still all these interpretations of the mystery called 'mind were not arbitrary whims, for each attempt captured some essential quality of the mind, no matter in what fantastic disguise. This is reflected in the fact that most of these mind concepts reappear in some form or other in modern psychology.

About 1830, a French “school” of handwriting interpretation began to form, among its numbers being Abbe Flandrin, Cardinal Boudinet.

If we look back over the path of both the old psychology and the old graphology, we find that both of them went through a number of clearly distinguishable and similar stages, although not in strictly chronological order. The structure of the mind was also investigated, its faculties and organs, and the forces from which it derives Consciousness and motion. Paralleling this came the research methods which sought to explain mental life through the movements and organs of the body, that is, in terms of physiology. The interesting part of these developments is that the old order of the problems apparently have been reversed. Now we begin with the analysis of the consciousness, and its physiological accompaniments, as in handwriting. Then we turn to a study of motor activity on the one hand, and on the other hand to the study of the structure of the mind, with special emphasis on the unconscious mental life. Finally, we come to the problems of individual psychology which, however, we do not attempt to probe by metaphysical speculation.

If you object that we are back once again in the realm of speculative psychology, bear in mind that not the problems, but the methods of the old psychology and of the old graphology both were unscientific and speculative. Modern psychology, and modern graphology both attempt to take up these problems, but with a rigorously scientific technique

As has been pointed out at some length, in the early days, handwriting interpretation was a 'Highly controversial topic, but by 1800, people were becoming extremely interested in seeing whether handwriting analysis could be of practical value. And during the 19th century, many famous people became interested.

George Sands, Delestre, Adolf Henze, Adolphe Desbarrolles, Louis Mond, to name only a few.

Today, this may seem incomprehensible, but it only demonstrates the extent to which human nature is the slave of established notions, and how difficult it is for us to accept anything new. Added to this, of course, was human inertia. Thus, graphological knowledge in the early 1800's was scarcely more than a very small body of published material, together with unpublished notes, memoranda, and the like, including observations, experiments and occasional attempts at graphological research in various parts of Europe, made at different times, what little knowledge of handwriting interpretation had accumulated was empirical for the most part, and unsystematic; being incomplete observations, with poor and fragmentary records, with little supporting experimentation¹. It was in 1810 that Goethe made the following note in his diary:

“And so the belief gained ground that handwriting provides a definite pointer regarding the character of the individual concerned and his state of mind at a particular time, even though such evidence as it may provide for one self and for others derives more from intuition than from any clear out conception. Exactly the same applies, in fact, to any system of physiognomy which, notwithstanding its true natural foundation, falls into disrepute only because attempts are made to make a science out of it.”

At the time Goethe wrote, graphology was still in its infancy, and its practice was indeed anything but scientific.

However, a thirst for more graphological knowledge goaded these early investigators since they sensed that such knowledge was a discovery of great value, and they knew that those persons who possessed such knowledge held a key to advancement, for every man needs to better he able to size up his fellow beings.

By now, it should be clearly apparent that to the creation of handwriting analysis, investigators from all continents and nations, over a great many centuries, have contributed. Certain it is, however, that the term “graphology,” was not used in connection with the science until Michon gave a name to this science. Michon was a pupil of Flandrin, who really fathered and laid the foundation work for establishing the new science. Michon really started graphology on its road to popularity. But before this, as we have seen, there had been a great many, other developments.

It was not until Michon that a serious and vigorous scientific method began to be applied to graphology. Obviously, the best-known representatives of pre-scientific graphology were Michon and his pupil, Crepieux-Jamin, Not until the turn of the 20th century did there appear those works which may be considered as having prepared the way for graphology and handwriting analysis as we understand it today. After 1871, graphology began to develop rapidly, particularly in Europe, particularly because of the effort of Hang Busse, Wilhelm Preyer,

Dr. Georg Meyer, and Ludwig Klages.

Perhaps we might sum up the highlights of the 19th century by noting that Goethe, Disraeli, Robert and Mrs. Browning, Thomas Carlyle were interested. Edgar Allan Poe was a student of the subject. Baudelaire was giving attention to handwriting and the story it told. Then, Michon's first book came on the market, and the fun really began. Michon's books caught the public fancy, and graphology awoke to find, like other sudden favorites, that its serious ambitions were drowning in a flood of popularity. Michon had started something; reading and interpreting handwriting was the newest craze, In France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany, and England, everyone was doing it. This condition overshadowed for many years the real value of the science—a value that only during recent years has become recognized.

As the 19th century closed, psychology's crusade had progressed to victory; neurology with its branches, was raising doubts as to the final evidence of the brain in the jar; psychiatry was shedding its first light; criminology had sprung to active power; leading men in all these fields had turned to handwriting for light on hidden places. Lombroso, Krafft-Ebbing, Havelock Ellis based important researches on their experiments with handwriting. Herschell, the criminologist, placed the highest value on deductions from handwriting. Bertillon was making keen and brilliant experiments with criminal psychology in handwriting.

Binet was experimenting with handwriting interpretation, and his findings were to lead him directly to development of his famous measures of intelligence. Dr. Hammond was writing on nervous diseases, and stressed the value of handwriting often as a first warning of dangerous physical degenerations and urged further work along these lines.

Supporters flocked from high places in professional and public life. Bertillon melted some scientific ice; Clemenceau and Poincare lent dignity to the movement; Crepieux-Jamin was making important contributions; Dr. Georg Meyer and Ludwig Klages entered the campaign with zest. National graphological societies were formed in both France and Germany before the close of the 19th century. Activity was getting into full swing. Research was beginning to become more extensive and precise. Important literature on graphology was beginning to appear. Practical work was carried into many fields, and finally, general cooperation with established science was being gained, in Europe.

Physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists and scientists in other fields of investigation fell in with writers, statesmen, business men and mystics. Yes, and the street-fair graphologists came right along. These latter were the ones who beat the drums, of course, and who made a circus out of the pilgrimage. Thus, when at last, graphology came to America in the late 1880's or early 1890's, the dignified reserves were dropping out by the score, and thus, unexplained, but very

much announced, graphology finally landed in America.

But the big step had been taken. The science of the present had come to the rescue of the so-called superstition of the past. On almost every side, proof is being added to proof that this ancient study is not a delusion, but a real thing—a jewel, as it were, dimmed and covered by the accumulation of bigotry and of superstition, yet one which contains within its depths the light of truth.

And now let us change the trend of our discussion, and consider the genealogy of modern handwriting analysis. Our discussion proper begins with the history of the “new” graphology, about 1871. As we have seen, a very brief review of the earlier history of graphology ranges over many thousands of years. We can do this without much danger today, whereas in the beginnings of the new movement, we would have been accused of being hopelessly entangled in the mazes of mythology. The new graphology’s attitude toward the old graphology has changed. Despite the fact that modern graphologists at first contemptuously disclaimed any kinship with the old theories and actually boasted that they knew nothing about them, they admit today that many a grain of truth lies hidden in them. One reason why the modern science of handwriting analysis was considered so completely “new” was that the old graphology was only superficially known.

Meanwhile, certain distinguished champions of the new science did not think it beneath their dignity to examine the old graphology in the light of modern historical methods. And then a change took place. Instead of boasting about the absolute originality of the new and modern graphology, the new investigators pointed with pride to a noble genealogical family tree, whose roots were anchored in thousands of years of antiquity,

Many of the newest phases of the new graphology are merely more profound reconsiderations of studies already some hundreds or even thousands of years old. It is not the mere priority of discovery, but the exploitation of the thing discovered that is really significant. Herein lies the task of the new graphology, when it consciously or unconsciously seeks to knit the raveled threads of tradition into its modern tapestry.

In speaking, however, of the old probings of graphology, we must make an important reservation: these were rarely pure graphology, per se. The old graphology’s problems and aims were frequently confused by theological, metaphysical, ethical and other considerations. A “pure” graphology is only now slowly taking crystalline form, and it is by no means its aim or ideal to remain isolated for all time.

It is again repeated that handwriting interpretation, or graphology, is not a new, but is, instead, an ancient science. If we define the essence of this science as the attempt to understand and interpret traits and tendencies of character through graphic clues in writings, we accept many

of the proceedings of earlier science, based upon elaborate theoretical considerations or conceptions. There is no justification in belittling the earlier or primitive theories. It is, rather, our business to examine and comprehend them as singularly interesting phenomena in the evolution of modern graphology.

Today, we have vast stores of data concerning the theories of earlier and primitive graphologists. The study of these data reveals the amazing fact that primitive handwriting analysts not only had a highly developed psychology, but also that they pursued all other sciences such as philosophy, ethics, medicine, and so on, as a part of their graphology.

Therefore, we may as well forego our arrogance toward those earlier primitive analysts, as indeed, we are compelled to do. We must admit that certain central problems of modern graphological science were already recognized in the early days, despite the fact that they were encased in a cocoon of superstition, reconsiderations of studies already some hundreds or even thousands of years old. It is not the mere priority of discovery, but the exploitation of the thing covered that is really significant. Herein lies the task of the new graphology, when it consciously or unconsciously seeks to knit the raveled threads of tradition into its modern tapestry.

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encased in a cocoon of superstition.

The big turning point was by 1875, when graphological science was once again beginning to become widely popular, thanks to the herculean efforts of Michon. And by 1925, only an half-century later, thanks to the researches of many serious investigators, graphology had become a respected household word in Europe, If we were to summarize this important half-century, we might sum it LIP as follows:

French school: Michon, followed by Crepieux Jamin.

German school: Hans Busse, Wilhelm Preyer, and Klages.

Austrian school: Dr. Georg Meyer.

English school: Saudek, Jacoby,

Swiss school: Pulver.

Italian school: Lombroso, Moretti

American school: von Hagen, Downey, Lucas, Rice, Stein-Lewinson Roman, Sonnemann, Mendel, Victor, Anthony, et. al.

Most of the early 20th century experimental and research work in graphology was done by Klages, Saudek, and Pulver. Later, Muhl, Roman, Rand, Sonnemann, Mendel, Victor and Wolff were to add to the store of scientific knowledge of graphology in America.

While there has been much speculation about graphology and the seemingly dogmatic pronouncements of graphologists have often discouraged sober-minded scientists and researchers from investigating the work of overenthusiastic handwriting analysts. However, we must also remember that the scientific phase of graphology, which roughly spans the last 75 years or so, is associated with the names of Georg Meyer, a psychiatrist; Wilhelm Preyer, a physiologist; Ludwig Klages, a psychologist; Robert Saudek, a psychologist; Max Pulver, a physician and psychiatrist; and with the works of P. Pophal, Muller and Enskat, and many others. The father of modern scientific graphology is really Klages, for it was he who laid the theoretical foundations.

The vast graphological literature that has appeared during the past 75 years stems, interestingly enough, largely from the pens of medical authors, and shows conclusively that graphology has been found a very useful adjunct in the medical sphere also. This applies with particular force in psychiatry, which has successfully made use of graphology as an auxiliary psychodiagnostic method. This graphological literature contains a number of remarkable studies on the connections existing between handwriting, on the one hands and intelligence, constitution, and hereditary factors, on the other hand. There are also interesting contributions on pathological phenomena.

Ever since the beginning of the so-called scientific phase of graphology, despite

widespread recognition of its achievements, handwriting analysis has had to wage a ceaseless struggle to justify its existence, and attest its truly scientific character is the face of unyielding opposition from other scientific circles. One reason for this is almost certainly the fact that the immense possibilities of graphological interpretation have, to this day, been exploited to the full by only a few select masters in the art, whereas too many charlatans and quacks have made claims for graphology that could not be performed. Moreover, the complete and utter confidence of the masters of our art, in their method, has sometimes led them to exceed the limits of what could be described as theoretically demonstrable. Besides, many of the interpretations made, although based upon apparently correct findings, were often couched in colorless, uncharacteristic terms, which might equally well apply not just to one but to a considerable number of individuals; by dint of accurate but purely mechanical methods of interpretation, the general qualities of an individual were correctly described, but not the specific, characteristic shades and nuances on which everything ultimately depended.

Professional graphologists have not always recognized this source of error, being too preoccupied with demonstrating the scientific character of their methods and devoting their main energies to attacking the spirit of dilettantism which for a time did indeed hold sway. The typical dilettante sooner or later betrays himself by his lack of depth; this applies in full measure in handwriting analysis, where the usual outcome is a spate of platitudinous phrases and an almost invariable lack of proportion. Such analyses are reminiscent of badly composed mosaics, and become unintentional caricatures of the real thing. Happily, their failure is so abject and so unmistakable that their authors do now wreak overmuch damage.

Yet, even where the handwriting analyst has an average grasp of his subject, his interpretations, although generally correct in themselves, are often very far from complete, being confined within purely technical, rule-of-thumb limits. The result once again fails to satisfy—a fact which only goes to confirm that science must be reinforced by some degree of intuition before a truly valid estimate of a person's character can be drawn from a study of his handwriting. In other words, even the most thorough technical knowledge in both science and art, and art perforce remains the prerogative of the artist.

A few years after Klages' basic work, Saudek published his study, *Experiments With Handwriting*, in which he declared that:

“...of the graphological theories accepted as valid so far, (Saudek himself) in principle refused to recognize anything which could not be proved either by methodical experiment or statistics derived from a very broad sample.”

At the same time, Saudek stated that In his own investigations, he had approached the

problem of handwriting “intuitively” and that this had enabled him to achieve an unrivaled degree of accuracy. Saudek’s novel, *Diplomats*, provides an interesting example of this, revealing as it does how a graphologist, by dint of studying handwriting, may be transported into a creative state of mind which then functions to facilitate a truly, “inspired” interpretation. The condition are here described perfectly correctly.

The value of any handwriting analysis, in fact, depends largely upon the personal qualifications of the expert concerned. Without an artist’s concept of the whole, i.e., without his breadth of combinative vision (which itself contain the seeds of interpretation), the serious practice of graphology is unthinkable. Only the gifted individual knows the spontaneous experience produced by handwriting; only he, through the interplay of intuition and strictly scientific method, can succeed in evolving a reliable character portrait. The mind of the handwriting analyst must be capable of comprehending the individual in his entirety failing this, the combinative process fails also, and *a fortiori*, the task of assembling the image of the total personality from the handwriting in question, Viewed in this light, present day graphology may be regarded as an art which makes use of scientific methods of interpretation.

It is no secret that the passage of time continually forms men into new molds. True, it depends in the first place on the individual’s own flexibility of character, how far he succeeds in adapting himself to a new age. Yet even the most rigid personality can not altogether withstand the passage of time. This explains why the character of a person always betrays traces of his future transformation. His development creates a new set of conditions, and it is understandable that old yardsticks become increasingly unreliable. As applied to handwriting interpretation, this means that rules which were once perfectly valid are later no longer applicable.

In the contours of modern handwriting, it is possible, with the aid of present-day knowledge, to detect in the psychosomatic personality, say, a predisposition toward new types of disease. Today’s trained and knowledgeable graphologist is thus able to establish an analysis of a person’s state of mind which was quite unknown to his predecessor colleagues of previous generations. The modern handwriting analyst, if he knows his job, and has the required sense of responsibility, should be able to uncover hidden qualities in a person’s writing with only the slenderest of graphic indications to help him.

The predisposition to disease, just mentioned, applies in particular to disorders of the autonomic nervous system, and here the expert graphologist can, with his analysis, make a useful contribution toward timely diagnosis. In many cases, he may be able to detect the disease in its preliminary phase, purely on a graphological basis, i.e., leaving all medical consideration aside—“symptoms” of incipient disease often find expression in the handwriting before actual

disorders become manifest and the patient goes to see his doctor. However, at this point, it should be emphasized that not even the most gifted handwriting analyst may pose medical diagnosis, being neither empowered nor entitled to do so. Quite apart from this aspect, however, the physician and the graphologist inevitably regard a patient's symptoms from completely different angles. While the former is concerned with curing the patient, and so regards the disease from a purely diagnostic and therapeutic viewpoint, the latter regards it as some disturbance of the whole. In point of fact, a handwriting completely devoid of disturbance (or potential disturbance) will practically never come his way.

Physical inhibitions will not be visible in the features of writing so long as the interplay of forces within the autonomic nervous system continue to operate in harmonious fashion. Naturally, this applies with particular force to young persons, though it should not be thought that, from the graphological point of view, this is necessarily true of youth as a whole. As soon as the energy begins to slacken, disorders previously latent become manifest. The handwriting of those suffering from autonomic nervous disorders certainly provides information concerning the vital side of the "wholeness" of their character.

The analyst studying a sample of writing will first fix his attention on what may be called its "atmosphere"—a definite, clearly recognizable quality in order to get the impression of the underlying character of an individual's vital Index which is primarily of constitutional origin. There is, however, also a variable factor, viz, the mood of the writer at the particular moment of writing, and one of the analyst's essential tasks is to draw the dividing line between what is mutable and what is immutable in the picture, with all the consequences for interpretation which this distinction entails in principle the analysis of a scribe's state of mind will, as the term implies, only reflect a picture of the individual at the time of writing.

Does this sound vaguely familiar? It should. Aristotle and Galen practiced this, in ancient Greece. But let us continue with our discussion.

Since a symptom can only be evaluated by considering the whole, the analyst normally first examines, not the salient details of the "stroke in itself" (Pophal), but the over-all graphic aspect of the whole writing. At the same time, characteristic interruptions in the strokes, which often produce a blurred impression, do provide important pointers. Unlike, say the "fragmentary" character of the schizophrenic's strokes, they point to a diminution in the underlying forces of the individual concerned, and form a characteristic feature in the contours of the writing.

One thing the "state-of-mind" analysis can not do is to detect the interplay of psychic and somatic influences; while, in the course of a disease process, the accent may lie now more on one side, now more on the other, and there always remains, basically speaking, "simultaneity" of the

psychic and the somatic symptoms. At the same time, in persons with autonomic nervous disorders, one invariably notes an elevated degree of wakefulness and a particularly intense obsession with their own physical condition. This being so, they tend on the one hand to exaggerate the nature of their disorders while, on the other, they develop a sixth sense for the function of their inner organs, as a result of which they may be able to anticipate future disease.

At this stage, the writing shows signs of premature exhaustion. Released by the intuition of disease to come, anxiety manifests itself as a psychosomatic condition in varied degrees and forms; nervousness, marked mainly by restlessness in the face of the imminent disorders and, proceeding therefrom, anxiety, fear in its pure form, which, if it persists long enough, may end by destroying the patient's life. The will to live is weakened, and the genuine direct relationship to natural processes and conditions uncertain; the reactions to excessive irritation become inadequate and ineffective.

This finds expression in writing in a variety of ways. It would be unrealistic to try and evaluate the psychological phenomena on a perceptual basis; it is not the quantitative but, more than anything else, the qualitative criteria that are essential after all, overstrain, exhaustion, and debility normally derive more from qualitative than from quantitative causes. An intense period of work may, of course, result in a temporary exhaustion, but it may also well act as a stimulant, as a psychic and physical tonic. Far more injurious is the qualitative factor inherent in the fact that man lives and acts contrary to his own nature, to his own physiology. This often applies particularly to the hustle and bustle of modern life, a form of "busy-ness" develops which in no way conforms to the underlying character of an individual. The resultant cramp, due to the irrational expenditure of energy, is then reflected in the writing.

What has just been discussed is both old and new knowledge. This information is from Austrian graphological research, during the years 1960 through 1963. Amazingly, this data was developed from a re-exploration of the older primitive graphological theories of several centuries ago!

The changes of our times cut so deep that no sphere of life remains unaffected by them. As analysts, we must reckon with this fact, Handwriting analysis can not afford to rest upon its laurels, but must strive continually to make its own contribution to an understanding of our own age, as revealed in the over-all characterological and psychosomatic personality picture of each individual. To draw the dividing line between health and disease will always remain the task and prerogative of the physician. At the same time, the present-day handwriting analyst, without in any way setting out to make a medical diagnosis, can yet be of invaluable assistance to the physician.

At this juncture, it might be wise to remind you of three vitally important distinctions in graphic behavior research. What is the difference between a law, a theory, and a hypothesis?

A hypothesis is a supposition, used as a basis for reasoning, a provisional explanation. When a hypothesis is unconfirmed by facts, it is rejected, otherwise; it becomes a theory, and then possibly a law.

A theory is a generalization which has not been absolutely proved. It stands between a law and a hypothesis.

A law is a generalization, a statement of the way things invariably behave under given conditions.

Please bear these three distinctions in mind, whenever you are dealing with the interpretation of graphic behavior.

However, this is far ahead of what we have to deal with now; handwriting analysis is not a trick, a game, a fad, or black magic. It is a science, and has earned this title. It has an honest and legitimate name, graphology, and is thus listed in all dictionaries. It is unique in that it offers the one means by which man's active functions can be studied apart from the person himself. Graphology is dedicated to the task of tracing the course of a person's mysterious life-flow from its invisible source to the visible mark made by his hand, of establishing the physiological and psychological evidence released by the mark of the hand and of interpreting this evidence to meet the necessities of man's daily life.

Mr. Bunker himself states, in Lesson 3 of the General Course: Graphology has contributed to the findings of psychiatry, neurology and criminology, it has opened up its own amazing practice in the fields of vocational guidance, human relationships. But there are many questions to be answered.

In World War II, graphology played an odd role in political affairs; the Nazis often used graphological information, and Allied intelligence furtive used graphological experts, with astonishing success

I hope that, in summary, that this evening a few basic points have been "hammered" home.

First, the history of handwriting analysis goes back to the origins of writing. Where did it first originate, and who coordinated it? No one knows positively, but we have a very good notion that it was somewhere in India.

Secondly, all the world over, the basic principles are generally the same. The graphic clues or signs are similar in Madrid or in Rangoon. While they may go by different names in different lands, the graphic behavior characteristics are universally identical that reveal certain

traits of character. For instance imagination reveals itself in large loop structures, and there it rests, for all handwriting analysts to meditate upon, whether it be in Cairo or in Seattle. And oh, yes—the knowledge that loops betray imagination was known long before Camillo Baldi—Aristotle commented upon this.

Thirdly, when one considers the extreme divergence between other arts and sciences in different countries, one has cause to marvel at the persistence of form in handwriting analysis. When it comes to the smaller strokes, there is some divergence, but this is easily accounted for in that there are national handwriting “styles,” and also in that a given kind of stroke or structure in its immediate suggestion. But the unconscious symbolisms remain. Fourth, modern handwriting analysis, with its emphasis on psychology, is still evolving, still improving.

And finally—why, after centuries of opposition, rational philosophy and experimental science, does graphology still survive and thrive as a worldwide phenomenon? Because it works. Ever since Nero and Baldi, there has been plenty of spectacular, even if seemingly unscientific evidence, that graphology does indeed work.

Thank you
Robert E Backman